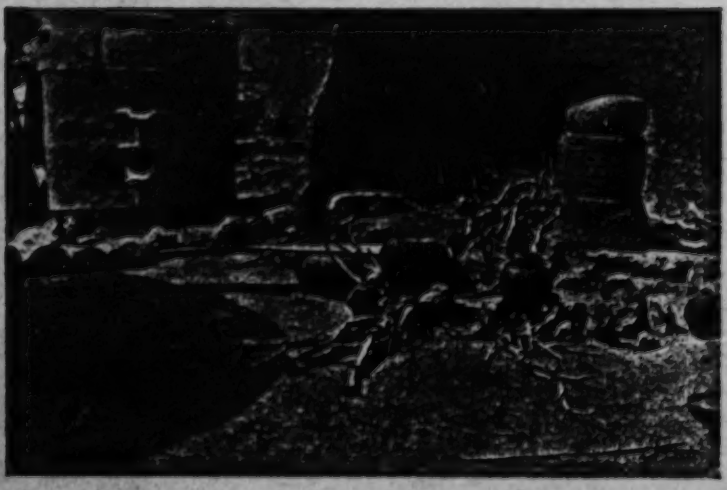
1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

358
417
343

A FAMILY HEAD REPAIRING HIS GRANARY



343
415

GRANARY AND COOKING PLACE IN A VILLAGE COMPOUND

[FACING. P. 226]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

251 of the compound or under a shady tree in front of the house. The grain is either spread out on the floor and beaten with sticks or pounded in a big wooden mortar. The former method can be used only in houses which possess a hard, clean floor in front of the huts; where there is only sandy ground (as is the case in many smaller villages) the second method has to be adopted. The first method, besides, is only possible when large quantities of grain are threshed. The small quantities normally needed for daily use are done more quickly by pounding. In either case at least three people (women and girls) will be working together. After threshing the grain is winnowed. This is done with the help of two platters of basket-work, by repeatedly pouring the grain slowly from one into the other; the woman who does the winnowing walks up and down in front of the house, letting the breeze remove the chaff. Finally the grain is milled, either on a grinding-stone or, again, in the mortar. The latter is the heavier but quicker work, the former is slower but gives the finer flour. The empty heads of grain left over after threshing are used [231] as fodder for horses; the chaff, collected after winnowing, as fodder for sheep and goats.

Food Crops and Market Crops

251 439 The foregoing description of methods of storage and preparation does not embrace all the crops grown in Nupe. Before we can make our list complete we must consider another aspect of the question, namely, whether the produce is used for household consumption or intended for sale. No comprehensive simple distinction is possible: we can only mark extremes—a few crops which are used exclusively for consumption or for marketing, respectively, while the rest, the large majority of crops, may be used for either purpose. The produce used for sale comprises first of all the non-food crops: cotton (for European export), indigo, and henna. Food crops grown almost exclusively for the market are: late ground-nuts and red pepper (for European export), and rice and onions (for internal markets or export to other countries in Nigeria). The crops which are rarely sold and used primarily for household consumption are few: cassava, beans, a few vegetables, and sweet potatoes and maize grown in small quantities on inland farms.

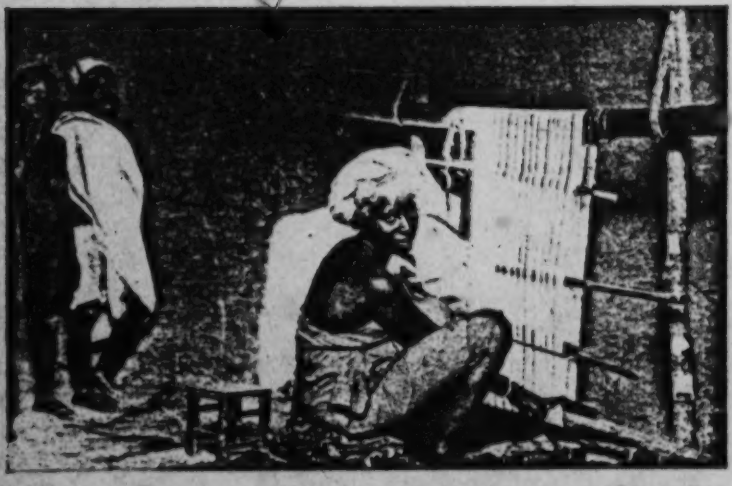
In the case of crops grown for export the question of storage does not arise, at least not for the producer himself, for this produce is sold almost immediately after harvesting (e.g. late ground-nuts, rice). Instead, we have two new questions to consider. First, that of transport and packing. But this also is mostly a matter for the trader and middleman, not for the producer. The native traders provide the big grass bags in which [415] the rice is packed and transported, the European trading-companies the sacks for cotton; the other produce is transported in the ordinary receptacles of the country, large baskets, gourds, or tin basins of European manufacture.

251 438 Second, there is the question of the special preparation, an elementary manufacturing process, which is frequently applied to the agricultural produce intended for local trade before it is put on the market. In the markets of Nupe agricultural produce is sold either as it is (e.g. yam,

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

323
415
291
516

AN OLD POTTER WOMAN



291
286
516
352

THE WOMEN'S LOOM

[facing p. 296]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

Cowrie-shells are a clumsy currency: you have to carry them about in bagfuls, and to count in thousands and tens of thousands. The numerical system of Nupe is fully equal to this task. Its elaboration and lucidity is not the least contribution to the efficiency of the exchange system of the country. Its scope is practically unlimited. A figure like 3,600,000 is expressed by this comparatively simple symbol: *gba kpotwani* (lit. two thousand times eighteen hundred, or, in more detail, two thousand times two hundred times nine). This facility in forming large numbers is due to the existence of a number of simple root words and multiples which are easy to handle. Omitting here the simpler figures 1–9, we find root words for 100, 200, and 2,000, multiples of 100 and 1,000 being formed by a simple multiplication of the root figures. For example, 400 is 200 . 2, i.e. *kpa gúba*, contracted to *kpoba*; 600 is 200 . 3, i.e. *kpa gúta*, contracted to *kpota*: 4,000 is 2,000 . 2, i.e. *gba gúba*, contracted to *gboba*; 6,000 is 2,000 . 3, i.e. *gba gúta*, contracted to *gbaotá*; 10,000 is 2,000 . 5, i.e. *gba gútsũ*, contracted to *gbotsũ*; and so on. A new unit is introduced as an alternative symbol for 20,000 cowries in the form of the *gura*, which is the name for the grass bags in which cowries were formerly packed. Thus 200,000 cowries (the traditional bride-price) make 10 *gura*; 400,000 20 *gura*, and so on.

The exchange rate between cowries and British money appears to have undergone some change. The original exchange rate, which I ascertained from the account of bride-price and tribute paid formerly, was 8*d.* for 2,000 cowries. Later the exchange value of cowries rose to 1*s.* for 2,000 cowries. This exchange rate is applied to-day when figures are quoted in cowries. Although cowrie-shells represented a currency in the strict sense of the word, they were used also for certain other purposes beside exchange, and had, above all, a certain value as ornaments. Gourds, bags, and musical instruments were formerly ornamented with cowries; but this practice has fallen into disuse.

To this elaborate system of units of exchange corresponds an almost as well-defined system of measures applied to commodities. We have spoken already of the *kpere*, the 'arm-length', a standard length used in measuring cloth; 10 *kpere* give, as we have seen, one full-length cloth. The measures used in selling agricultural produce are even more interesting, as quantities of these commodities do not lend themselves easily to simple forms of standardization. The unit for unthreshed grain is the bundle, *epa* (from *pa*, to tie up) or load, *kara*. It weighs very nearly 60 lb., but its size and weight vary a little according to the quality of the grain: of poorer grain there would be a larger quantity in the bundle, of better-class grain a proportionately smaller quantity, the main point being the equality in the value. Threshed grain is sold in large or small gourds, for which to-day tin bowls and basins are usually substituted. A large basinful of grain, *evo* (lit. gourd), contains twelve small bowls, *kpasu* (the latter taking a little over one pound). One bundle of unthreshed grain is reckoned to correspond to one *evo* of threshed grain. With maize five to six cobs are reckoned to give one small bowl of maize-flour. Rice is sold in large gourds (*evo*) or, more frequently, in small bowls, ten of which as a rule give one gourd. Beans are calculated in

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

A WOMAN TRADER SELLING HER HUSBAND'S SILVERWARE

342
415
443

A FOOD MARKET

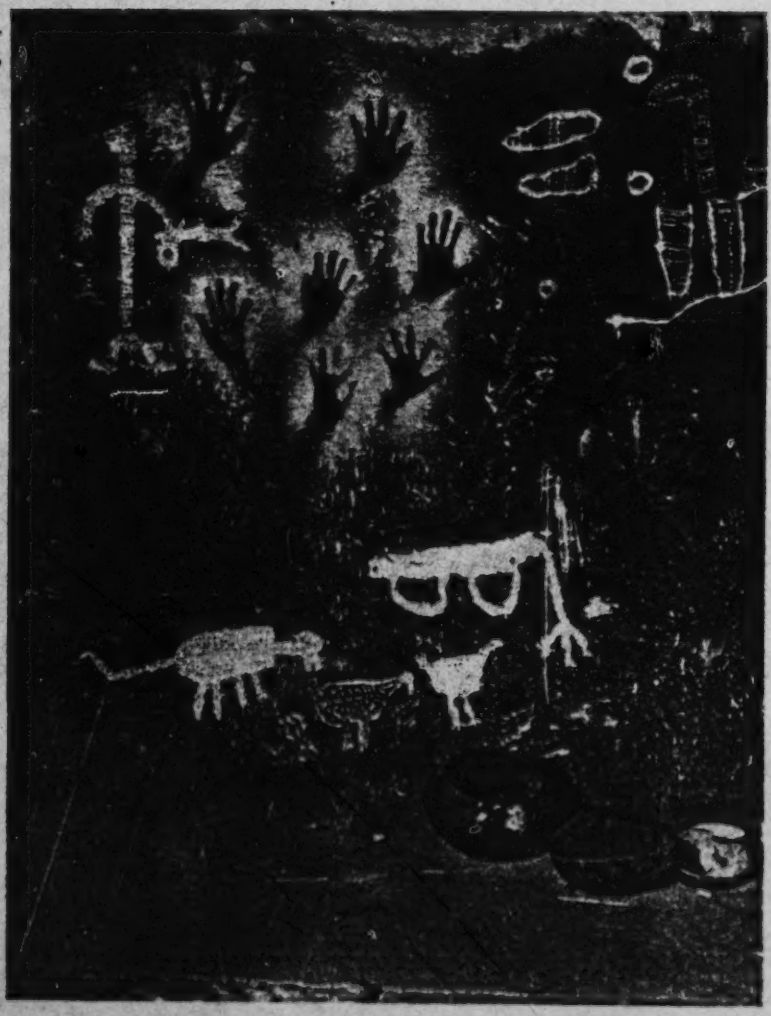
482
443

[Facing p. 330]

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954

FF52 Nupe FF52

532
353
415

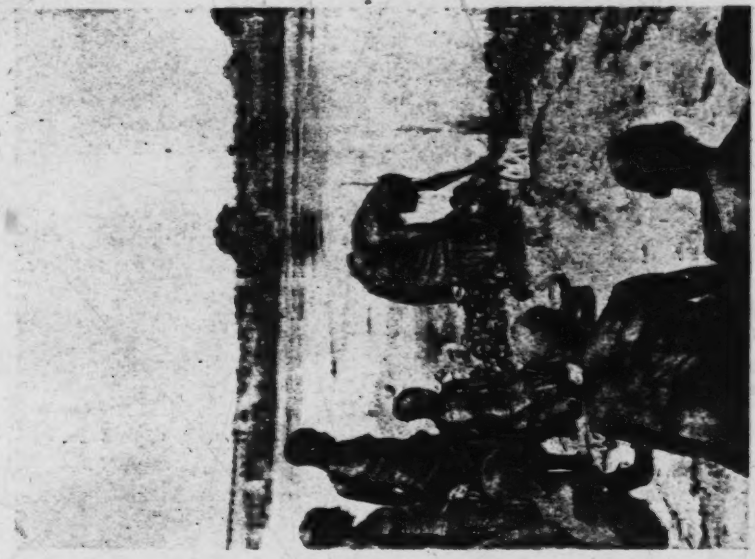


3. Wall paintings in a Nupe house

[p. 22(B)]

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

782
291
516
415



7. *Ndduma* sacrifice on the Niger

[142]

6. *Ziba* sacrifice

[p. 38 (R)]

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

796 X
795
782

8. Scene from *gunnu* dance in Jebba

[415]

9. *Dzakó* sacrifice
[p. 70 (A)]

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

796[X]
[535]

12. *Dzakó* dance

[304
852
415]

13. Cutting of tribal marks

[p. 86 (A)]

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

764

18. Levelling the ground over a new grave

759
● 415
516

19. The master of the *cigbeciži* in his ' dispensary'

[p. 118 (B)]

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date)1956
FF52 Nupe FF52
Bida

Crafts of Bida

323.
177

IT is something of a shock to find that the traditional glass-making families of Bida, whilst working very much as they always have worked in their own quarter of the town, are now using beer bottles as their raw material. They melt the green and brown bottles from Britain, Denmark, Germany and Holland in the same wood-burning, hand-blown furnaces in which they used to make their own glass "from local sands and stones with a little ash". The romance has been damaged and some interesting technology will soon have been lost; but from the worker's point of view, the change can only be for the better.

326
177

The brass-workers too are finding their materials among "European" scrap, and aluminium is creeping in as the metal for some of the cheaper lines. Yet once the Nupe blacksmiths' groups smelted their own iron in charcoal-fired blast furnaces, force-fed by hand bellows, from ore quarried in the sugarloaf hills which stand up abruptly from the plain around Bida.

326

Once, these smiths fashioned the weapons for the raiding parties which, less than one hundred years ago, were able to terrorise both sides of the Niger valley from above Jebba to below the confluence of the Benue.

These military activities were, it seems, the main cause of a system of craft guilds in Bida which appears to have been as complete as any known in mediaeval Europe. Every aspect of production and supply appears to have been strictly controlled by the state to meet the state's requirements. The guilds of craftsmen in iron, leather, and embroidery

[Text continues on p. 141 -- Analyst]

326
415

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1956

FF52 Nupe FF52

Bida

"King of the dancers"—
a Bida brass spinning toy

Making a glass bangle. The bellows man sits behind the central furnace

323
516
415
301

[p. 140]

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1956

FF52 Nupe FF52

Bida

Workers in brass and silver. The goat-skin bellows are similar to those of the glass-makers

326
516
291
415

[p. 142]

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1956
FF52 Nupe FF52
Bida

531
415

No mechanical aids are used
to help achieve symmetry in design on trays

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1956
FF52 Nupe FF52
Bida

Heavy silver bracelets of a type worn by the beauties of Bida for centuries

Good examples of Bida silver work attain a high standard of craftsmanship

415
531

[p. 144]

Nigeria: Pottery. **Nicholson.**

Bida (Nupe) Pottery. *By W. E. Nicholson.*

These notes refer to one only of the groups of potters in Bida, Niger Province, and the actual workers observed belong to Augi's house in the Quarter of Natsu.

I. *Workers.*—All the operators are women. The family came originally from Sokoto, but the mother of the present potters is said to have learnt the trade from a Yoruba woman, *i.e.*, the technique may be Yoruba or Nupe in origin. All are Mohammedans, so that the survival of tabus, etc., in the craft is not to be expected, and no trace of them was found.

Two varieties of article are made:—

(i) Small water jug, chiefly used for ablutionary purposes, called in Nupe *Masuge* (equivalent to the Hausa *Buta* or *Shantali*—Man, 1929, 34).

(ii) A larger water-container called in Nupe *Dukŭ-nyŭtĭ* (equivalent to the Hausa *Pukunya*—Man 1931, 186).

The following notes refer to the former only of these.

II. *Preparation of the Clay.*—Suitable clay is found in the swamps of the Gbako river at Badeggi, about 10 miles east of Bida. Itinerant vendors from this village bring it round for sale, and it costs about 10d. per cwt. During part of the rainy season floods prevent its collection. The clay is pounded to powder in a wooden mortar identical with that used in the preparation of food. It is levigated—

(i) Usually by the addition of powdered potsherds; this powder is sifted before being added to the clay, through a sieve made of slivers of bamboo.

(ii) Sometimes native bricks of sun-dried mud are burnt and powdered and used instead of potsherds.

After the addition of the levigating material the clay is wetted until it attains the right consistency.

III. *Building of the Pot.*—(*a*) Old cloths are spread on the ground and the operator places in front of herself a flat sand-stone slab about 1 inch thick; it is said that these stones are purchased from the Bead-makers and that they come from further south in Ilorin country; they are 'natural,' *i.e.*, pieces of stratified rock which splits into suitable thicknesses; the slab is well dusted with powdered potsherds to prevent sticking. A ball of clay (*a* (i)) is placed on the slab, manipulated into a 'pancake' (*a* (ii)) and beaten out thin with a stone hand-beater; any